

**PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTE  
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HEALTH LAW**

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Americans face many new health threats including West Nile virus, SARS, monkeypox, mutating strains of influenza, the asthma epidemic and others. State, tribal, and local public health laws are vital to protect the public from new and existing threats to their health. To be effective, public health laws must clarify the infrastructure and responsibilities of a public health system and provide standard approaches for controlling conditions of public health importance.

To deal with modern health threats, statutes should authorize:

- Modern surveillance techniques, including reporting practices, for the monitoring of conditions of public health importance.
- Epidemiological investigations in response to specific outbreaks or high rates of diseases or conditions among sub-populations.
- Testing and screening for existing and emerging conditions.
- Vaccination for vulnerable populations, notably children, and others at risk of disease transmission.
- Responsible and respectful use of quarantine and isolation, where warranted, in cases of communicable conditions.

For more information or for a complete copy of the Turning Point Model State Public Health Act, visit [www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/improving/turningpoint/MSPHA.htm](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/improving/turningpoint/MSPHA.htm) or [www.turningpointprogram.org](http://www.turningpointprogram.org).